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A word from the President

Dear AARES members

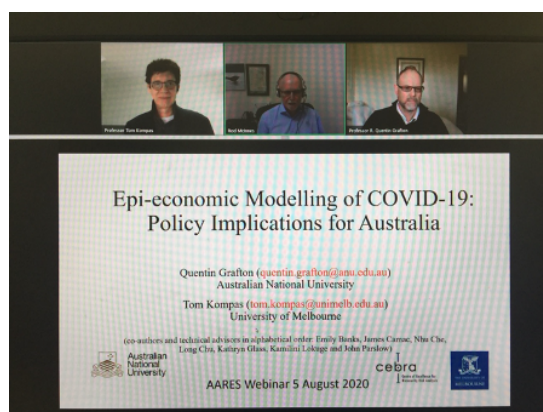
I'm feeling very sad for all our AARES colleagues that are in another shutdown and dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic as I sit to write my President's column for the newsletter this month. We all hope that things will improve soon, and that everyone is as well as they can be.



Federal Council and AARES branches have continued working hard on research connections for members in the past couple of months. Of particular note, Claire Doll (who along with Tiffany Reed Marshall is one of our two fabulous Early Career Researchers (ECRs) on Council) helped organise a webinar meet and greet for ECRs with senior AARES figures: namely myself, Dave Pannell and John Rolfe. See Claire's write-up of this event in this newsletter.

Other webinars have concentrated on some of the biggest events of 2020. On 22nd July Professor Glyn Wittwer presented on Australia's triple catastrophe of drought, bushfires and COVID-19.

And on 5th August Professors Tom Kompas and Quentin Grafton gave us a fascinating talk on epi-economic



modelling of COVID-19 and policy implications. It has been fantastic to see many of our members playing a leading role in providing informed modelling and results for decision-making.

We have awarded the 2020 Heading East award to Adnan Fakir from UWA. In addition, Sanaz Kalkhoran (our 2019 award winner from UWA who was unable to attend the NZARES conference last year) will be presenting online at the NZ conference.

Given the current pandemic situation, we are considering moving the AARES 2021 conference online. We will keep everyone informed of a decision as soon as it is made.

Please stay safe and isolated

Sarah Ann Wheeler

AJARE Special Issue under development

The Australian Journal of
**Agricultural and
Resource Economics**



The COVID-19 pandemic that gathered pace in 2020 has caused death and economic damage throughout the world. Measures



designed to reduce the spread of the virus have impacted almost every aspect of life, from how and where we work; where and what goods

and services we consume; where we travel; and how our social networks function. It has challenged Australian and New Zealand agriculture and other resource-based industries with significant impacts on trade and food distribution systems in both countries and throughout the world.

While the pandemic has led to some new opportunities, overwhelmingly 2020 sparked intense questioning about how to deal with calamitous events and what other potential disruptions could lie ahead.

Work is underway for a special issue of AJARE focussing on global scale disaster, disruption, recovery and resilience and their intersection with Australian and NZ agriculture and resource-based sectors. While examining the implications of COVID-19, the edition will go beyond focusing on the specific consequences of the current pandemic and explore systematic weaknesses and exposures to global scale disasters across multiple sectors and scales. In addition to dealing with practical lessons emerging from the effects of and response to COVID-19, the edition will draw together theoretical and methodological contributions that can help shape our thinking on this topic.

The co-editors of the special issue are Professor Lin Crase (Lin.Crase@unisa.edu.au) and Dr Deborah Peterson (dcp.economics@gmail.com). They are currently assembling papers that seek to cover these types of topics by directly contacting experts in this field. Others who may be interested in offering a paper are encouraged to contact the co-editors to discuss alignment of potential contributions.

Crawford Fund Award to Sophie Lountain

Congratulations to **Sophie Lountain** who received a 2020 International Agricultural Student Award from the Crawford Fund. Sophie is an AARES South Australia Committee Member and Masters by Research (Applied Economics) student at the University of South Australia.



The Crawford Fund offers a number of [competitive research funding awards](#) each year. The Fund is an Australian non-government organisation that encourages greater recognition in Australia of the importance of international agricultural research, development and training for food and nutrition security.

This award will enable Sophie to research the feasibility of using South Australian reclaimed water technology in West Bengal, India.

AARES Heading East Award to Adnan Fakir

Congratulations also to **Adnan Fakir**, a PhD student at UWA, was awarded the 2020 AARES Heading East Award for his first-authored paper titled: “Effects of smoking on agricultural productivity”. The paper was written with several colleagues from Bangladesh. Adnan will be presenting his paper at the NZARES 2020 conference online, and is also given the opportunity to use his award for attendance at the AARES annual conference in 2021.



Better Webinars

Wondering how to make your webinars more interesting and keep your audience’s attention? You can find good tips on these sites:

[18 tips on how to conduct an engaging webinar](#)

[Running more engaging webinars](#)

[Tips, best practices and software for online lectures](#)

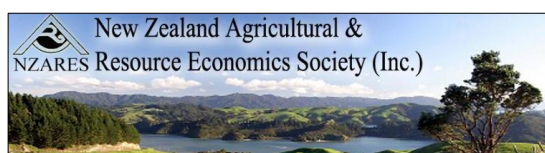
Conference News

Register now for the NZARES 2020 conference



NZARES's conference will be held online from Wednesday 26th to Friday 28th of August 2020. The conference theme is 'Agriculture to 2050 and beyond', with panel sessions and guest speakers focussing on water policy, the economic impacts of Covid-19 and climate change.

The NZARES committee invite you to register for the conference at the NZARES website <http://www.nzares.org.nz/register2020.aspx>. You can register from now up until the day before the conference. Please note you must register for the conference to receive the conference session links required to participate.



Wednesday 26 th August		
10:30-10:45	Welcome and Conference Opening Anita Wreford, NZARES President	Session link (TBC)
10:45-12:00	PANEL I: The Economic Impacts of Covid-19	Session link (TBC)
12:00-1:30	Lunch Break	
1:30-3:00	Contributed Paper Session I	Session link (TBC)
Thursday 27 th August		
10:30-12:00	Contributed Paper Session II	Session link (TBC)
12:00-1:30	Lunch Break	
1:30-3:00	Contributed Paper Session III	Session link (TBC)
3:00-3:30	Afternoon Break	
3:30-4:30	NZARES Annual General Meeting	Session link (TBC)
Friday 28 th August		
10:30-11:15	Robin Johnson Memorial Session Catherine Leining, New Zealand Climate Change Commission - New Zealand's low-emission transition and emission pricing: Challenges ahead.	Session link (TBC)
11:15-12:30	PANEL II: Water Reform - Essential Freshwater Action for Healthy Waterways	Session link (TBC)
12:30-1:30	Lunch Break ***Lunch Provided at Regional Hubs***	
1:30-2:30	AARES Address Sarah Wheeler, AARES President	Session link (TBC)
2:30-3:00	Awards and Conference Closing Ramilan Thiagarajah, In-coming NZARES President	Session link (TBC)
3:00-4:00	President's Shout ***Drinks Provided at Regional Hubs***	

This online conference is proudly sponsored by our Gold Sponsor



IAAE Interconference Symposium postponed

The organisers of the IAAE Interconference Symposium regret to inform everyone that this event, originally scheduled for 7-9 October 2020, has been postponed. The plan is to move this conference to the week of 8 November 2021, still in beautiful Montevideo, Uruguay. The organisers thank all who agreed to participate and contribute in different parts of the program and organisation of the Conference, and hope is that you will be willing to continue such involvement in 2021.





31st International Conference of Agricultural Economists to be held in New Delhi, India

The IAAE flagship conference – the International Conference of Agricultural Economists (ICAE) – is held every three years and attracts about a thousand colleagues from around the world. The 31st conference will be held in New Delhi, India 21-25 August, 2021 with pre-conference workshops on 20th August 2021. The theme, *Agriculture under the 4th Industrial Revolution*, will capture the latest challenges and opportunities for global

food and agriculture. The first plenary will be on the COVID-19 pandemic and its implications for global food and agriculture. Other plenary themes include climate change, water scarcities, digital revolution, dietary transition and health, value chains and trade. More information can be found on the [Conference website](#).

Asian Society of Agricultural Economists Conference postponed

Due to the global COVID-19 situation, the 10th ASAE conference, due to be held in Beijing, has been postponed to early 2021. The organisers indicate that all the existing submissions of abstracts will be valid, and new or updated submissions are possible until a new deadline has been set. Any inquiries can be directed to asae2020@pku.edu.cn.



Upcoming webinars

AARES member **Dr Alexandra Peralta** is giving an online seminar for the ANU's Development Policy Centre on 26 August 2020 (12pm to 1pm) on 'Gender differences in social learning among Vanuatu cocoa growers'. Dr Alexandra Peralta is a Lecturer in Agricultural and Food Economics with The Centre for Global Food and Resources (CGFAR) at the University of Adelaide. Further information and registration details can be found at <https://crawford.anu.edu.au/news-events/events/17203/gender-differences-social-learning-among-vanuatu-cocoa-growers>.



Opportunities knocking

Calling great essay writers

The annual event of the International Food and Agribusiness Management Association (IFAMA) - the global Student Case Competition - is pivoting to a competitive Essay Competition this year because COVID-19 prevented people getting together in-person for the conference in the Netherlands. The essay can be written individually or in teams, and must address the question: "How can the sustainability, productivity, and market access of smallholder sugar cane farmers be improved?". Winners of the top 20 essays will be asked to present a 5-minute video that will be presented before a panel of judges. The winning essays will be published in a special IFAMA 2020-Rotterdam publication. Winners will be awarded prizes. **Submissions due by 30 September 2020.** More information can be found at <https://www.ifama.org/international-essay-competition>



[AgriEducate's annual essay competition](#) is back. There are multiple categories to enter including Economics/Commerce/Business. For application into the prized categories, entrants must be studying an undergraduate or postgraduate course either full or part time at a recognised Australian university as of the closing date for applications.

Entries (1500 words) are due by 31 August 2020.

Two PhD scholarships at Curtin University



Curtin University (Perth) is offering two new PhD Scholarships:

- (1) Data-driven systems for Australian red meat integrity & supply chain efficiency
- (2) Valuing natural capital in WA Wheatbelt farming systems

Applications close **1 September 2020.**



PhD/Masters opportunities at UNSW

Dr Megan Evans (University of New South Wales, Canberra) seeks expressions of interest from potential PhD or Masters students with interests in sustainable finance, agriculture, biodiversity conservation and social research skills. Funding is available and there is capacity to support up to two PhD (potentially Masters) candidates. [Applications](#) are needed by **18 September 2020.**

Economists wanted at BDO Australia



BDO is one of the world's leading accountancy and advisory organisations with over 88,120 people working in 167 countries, including 9 offices around Australia. BDO is seeking a [graduate economist and senior economist](#) to join their team. BDO also offers vacation and cadet opportunities.

AARES career directions

Where do AARES members work? How did they get to do what they are doing? In this section Claire Doll (PhD student with UWA and AARES ECR council representative) provides a report on the recent Q&A session with the current AARES President Professor Sarah Wheeler, and two past presidents, Professors John Rolfe and David Pannell. And Deborah Peterson (AARES News and Views editor) reports on her interview with Liz Petersen on her experiences on the Australian government's Future Drought Fund Consultative Committee.

AARES Fireside Coffee Chat: A Discussion with Early Career Researchers

On July 15th, 35 early and mid-career researchers from across Australia (and beyond) gathered for a Q&A session with a panel of highly accomplished and supportive AARES members. We were fortunate to have our current AARES President, Professor Sarah Wheeler, along with two past presidents, Professor John Rolfe and Professor David Pannell, present for a casual, honest and open conversation on careers and life.

Over the course of the session, we learned about the unique experiences (including farming, consulting, and government work) that led these professors to success in their careers in the Agricultural and Resource Economics discipline. The panellists tackled questions on a wide range of topics including work-life balance, research communication, time management, and career planning.

Some takeaway advice for Early Career Researchers (ECRs) and Mid Career Researchers (MCRs) from the two AARES two presidents:

- Write. Write early, write often and then rewrite again.
- Atypical career paths are more common than we may think.
- Decisions that prioritise family won't necessarily hold you back and can even lead to great career opportunities.
- Rejection is hard, but it's important to understand where it's coming from. For a reviewer, rejection is often easier than offering detailed feedback.
- The sooner you stop comparing yourself to others, the happier you will be.

The panellists were especially sympathetic to ECRs and MCRs looking to progress their careers in the current economy. Participants were encouraged to seek out opportunities to work with their supervisors and other senior discipline members to identify and help write grant applications to secure future work.

Many thanks to all the ECRs and MCRs that contributed questions for an engaging discussion, and to our three panellists for their participation and thoughtful advice. Stay tuned for more AARES Q&A sessions in the future!

Serving on government Panels: Future Drought Fund Consultative Committee

In September 2019, the then Federal Minister for Water Resources, Drought, Rural Finance, Natural Disaster and Emergency Management David Littleproud announced the Future Drought Fund Consultative Committee as an important milestone in taking action on drought.

A group of eminent Australians were invited to help deliver \$100 million in drought resilience and preparedness programs to communities every year through the [Future Drought Fund](#). The committee's main role is to advise the Federal Minister responsible for drought about how these funds could be spent to enhance drought resilience, preparedness and response across Australia. The Fund began with a \$3.9 billion credit that is anticipated to grow to \$5 billion by 2028-2029.

The committee is made up of people with track records of success in agricultural economics, managing climate risk, rural and regional development and natural resource management from rural and regional communities across Australia. The committee is chaired by Mr Brent Finlay (former president of the National Farmers Federation), and the committee members include long time AARES member **Dr Elizabeth Petersen** (Liz). The other committee members are Dr Kate Andrews, Dr Wendy Craik AM, and Ms Caroline Welsh.



Liz says that the government was looking for committee members that had a broad knowledge of Australian agriculture, were familiar with the relevant academic literature, and had an understanding of how government and industry works. She is thoroughly enjoying her role on the Committee. She says that staff working on the Future Drought Fund in the Australian government's Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, as well as other Committee members, are passionate, hard-working, and committed to providing new and innovative incentives for rural, regional and remote Australian's to strengthen their drought resilience.

Being on the Committee has allowed Liz to further develop her understanding of the varied aspects of drought resilience and to discover new and creative ways to foster drought resilience. She has enjoyed being a part of a collegial team that encourages full and frank discussion, respects differing opinions and is willing to debate various issues to find the best solution.

Liz is Principal Applied Economist at consulting firm Advanced Choice Economics Pty Ltd, an Adjunct Senior Lecturer at the University of Western Australia and part-time Senior Research Officer at the University of Queensland. She has been a member of AARES since 1996. Liz emphasised that being a member of AARES has been foundational for her career development. She was Federal Secretary of AARES early in her career which allowed her to connect with many Agricultural and Resource Economists across Australasia that would otherwise not have been possible. By participating in the annual AARES Conferences and various other federal and branch activities, she had the benefit of being mentored by senior members, as well as mentoring more junior members. Liz also remarked how being part of AARES is like being part of a family - you make very close connections over the years.

Final call for nominations

Nominations are called for the positions of AARES **President-Elect**, **Distinguished Fellows** and **Distinguished Life Members**.

Nominations should be signed by at least two current AARES members, include a summary case to support the nomination, and include the signature of the nominee signalling their willingness to accept the role if elected. Selection criteria for these awards are at <https://www.aares.org.au/about-AARES/AARES-honours/>.

Nominations close on **31 August 2020**, and can be made directly to the selection committee Chair John Rolfe at j.rolfe@cqu.edu.au.

Nominations for AARES **Outstanding Post Graduate Thesis**, **Quality of Research Discovery** and **Quality of Research Communication** are also open.

For further information, see <https://www.aares.org.au/awards/best-postgraduate-thesis-award/>, <https://www.aares.org.au/awards/quality-of-research-communication-award/> and <https://www.aares.org.au/awards/quality-of-research-discovery-award/>.

Nominations close on **15 November 2020**. Nominations may be sent to Susan Hester, Chair of the committee, at shester@une.edu.au.

Comments, suggestions? Would you like to make a contribution to the next News and Views issue?

Please contact the News and Views Editor
Deborah Peterson at dcp.economics@gmail.com